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EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

Routing Slip

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| SUSPENSE | | 25 April 1978 | | | |
| | | Date | | | |

Remarks: Please prepare DCI response. Enclosures were attached to ER 78-8815 which conveyed Dr. Brzezinski's letter to us for action. Understand your response is being forwarded today.

Executive Secretary

24 Apr 78

Date

STAT

Envoys Kept Informed, CIA Chief Says

By George Lardner Jr.
Washington Post Staff Writer

Central Intelligence Agency Director Stansfield Turner said yesterday that U.S. ambassadors are better informed than ever about CIA operations abroad, but he insisted that they still don't need to know all the details.

Testifying before the House Intelligence oversight subcommittee, Turner said that in most cases, the CIA will withhold the identity of its sources and the names of its agents, especially if they are foreign officials with whom an ambassador deals on a regular basis.

"It's not because we don't trust the ambassador," the CIA director declared. But under what he wryly called "Turner's Law," he said that the danger of leaks increases in "geometric proportion" to the number of people who know a particular secret.

* Especially hazardous, Turner indicated, was the prospect of an ambassador making some giveaway slip of recognition on greeting a foreign minister in a receiving line when the ambassador knows the minister to be a CIA "asset."

"We've had instances of this," the CIA chief told the subcommittee headed by Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wis).

"In order to protect information, you must sometimes dissimulate," Turner said, but that, he emphasized, "takes training."

Turner made his remarks under questioning by Aspin about the extent of CIA compliance with a directive from President Carter making the American ambassador the person in charge of all U.S. operations in a given country. The Wisconsin congressman cited reports that the CIA may have been hedging on that directive.

"I say to you, sir, that that's balderdash," Turner protested. Under an agreement he signed with Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance last spring, he said, CIA station chiefs abroad have become more, not less, candid with their ambassadors. While some information might be held back from an ambassador, Turner said:

"It doesn't mean he's not in charge. It means he doesn't need all the details to be in charge."

According to the CIA director, there is no rule dictating that a U.S. ambassador must be told everything the CIA is doing—and no rule against it either.

"That's a matter for negotiation between the ambassador and the chief

of station," Turner told the subcommittee. "The chief of station either volunteers or he doesn't volunteer . . . the ambassador either asks or he doesn't ask."

Disputes over how much information to share are supposed to be settled by Vance and Turner, but the CIA director said none has reached that stage. Only one or two ambassadors abroad have voiced any complaints, he added.

"Some ambassadors are very possessive," Turner said in an unusually detailed accounting of the persistent rivalries within U.S. embassies around the world. Occasionally, he said, an ambassador will insist on exclusive control over the political intelligence assessments to be sent back to Washington. The CIA has refused to go along, the subcommittee was told.

"I can't accept that," Turner testified. He said he wants, and demands, separate assessments from his CIA mission.

Most of the morning-long bearing was devoted to Turner's promulgation last Nov. 30 of new rules governing the CIA's relationships with U.S. news media. They prohibit the CIA from approaching journalists accredited by

a U.S. outlet "for the purpose of conducting intelligence activities."

Turner said the regulations forbid the CIA from asking "even a willing journalist to seek out or furnish particular information or assistance."

"A U.S. media representative, under these regulations, could quite legally work for the KGB, but not for me," the CIA director told Rep. John M. Ashbrook (R-Ohio) at one point.

Turner acknowledged that the rules do not cover foreign-owned news services, such as Reuter, with outlets here or organizations such as the former U.S. Information Service or Radio Free Europe. In addition, the rules govern only the CIA and not other U.S. intelligence agencies.

Critics have charged that the rules are loaded with loopholes, including one permitting Turner to make any exception he deems necessary, but the CIA director said he has yet to use the "escape clause."

Rep. Wyche Fowler Jr. (D-Ga.) said he thought Turner had done "an extraordinary job" in protecting American journalists from temptation, especially the hungrier ones.

"As we all know, except for Washington," Fowler said, "most journalists are hungry. Up here, they loosen their belts after lunch."

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Executive Registry

78-8815/2

OLC 78 1510/B

April 21, 1978

Adm. Stansfield Turner, Director
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

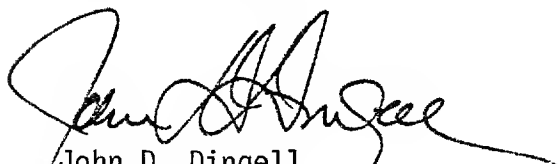
Dear Admiral Turner:

Last week we wrote to President Carter requesting that we be fully informed as to the veracity of allegations in an article appearing in the May issue of Outside magazine that the CIA placed nuclear-powered monitoring stations in India for surveillance of Chinese nuclear weapons tests in the 1960's. A copy of our letter and the article were sent to you.

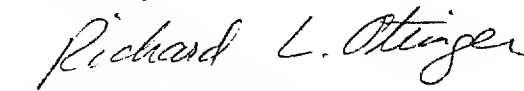
The President's Assistant for National Security Affairs has informed us that you have been assigned responsibility by the President for the investigation into this matter and that you have already begun informing the Select Committees on Intelligence. A copy of his letter is enclosed.

We request that you inform us fully of the facts in the case. This is all the more important now because of the apparent conflict between statements contained in the Outside article and those in the speech of Prime Minister Desai to the Indian Parliament on Monday, April 17th (also enclosed).

Our staffs will be in contact with your office shortly to set up a meeting in the near future so that you can apprise us of the facts of the situation.


John D. Dingell
Member of Congress

Sincerely,


Richard L. Ottinger
Member of Congress

RLO:nm
Enclosures

THIS STATIONERY PRINTED ON PAPER MADE WITH RECYCLED FIBERS

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 17, 1978

APR 18 1978

Dear Congressman Ottinger:

Your letter to the President of April 12, 1978 has been referred to the Director of Central Intelligence. He has already begun the process of reporting to the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence on the questions you pose.

Sincerely,



Zbigniew Brzezinski

The Honorable Richard L. Ottinger
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

WASHINGTON, D. C.

APR 18 1978

STATEMENT IN THE PARLIAMENT OF INDIA BY
PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI ON APRIL 17
ON PLANTING OF A NUCLEAR DEVICE IN THE HIMALAYAS

The Honourable Members are quite understandably exercised over the reports that have appeared here based on a news item which appeared in the United States about the attempt to locate a nuclear fuelled power-pack on the heights of Nanda Devi. Failure in this attempt has raised just apprehensions about the possibility of contamination of waters of our sacred river Ganga. I can assure the House that all of us share this concern of the Honourable Members as well as the people at large at the possible hazard to our environment and people.

The House is aware that as soon as these reports came to our attention we expressed our grave concern to the US authorities and have subsequently been in touch with them in New Delhi and in Washington. We have also made thorough enquiries at our end to obtain as complete details as possible in the last few days. In the light of the international situation prevailing at that time and the scientific developments which were taking place both far and near, it was decided by the Government of India and the Government of the United States at the highest level that a remote sensing device with nuclear power-pack should be installed near the highest point on Nanda Devi with the object of securing information about the missile developments. Accordingly, a mountaineering expedition

manned only by Indian mountaineers went up the Wanda Devi followed by a joint Indo-American expedition scientifically equipped with the device with a view to installing it at a height of 25000 feet.

When the expedition was approaching the summit, it was overtaken by a blizzard which made further ascent impossible and facing fatal hazards to the party, they were obliged to retreat to the lower camp at a height of 23 thousand feet. In precipitate descent under very trying and exacting conditions, they had to leave the power-pack securely cached. With the onslaught of winter, no attempt to locate and retrieve the device was immediately possible and had to be postponed. Another expedition was mounted in May 1966 that is, in the following Spring with the intention of retrieving and installing the device. However, the expedition party on arrival at the area discovered that a major avalanche had occurred around the area and the device could not be located. Every attempt was made by ground and aerial search aided by supersensitive scientific equipment to trace the power-pack, but these efforts proved in vain. After all such attempts the conclusion was reached by our experts, which included scientists, was that if power-pack had broken, it would have been detected through these means and likelihood was that the device got buried deep somewhere, after having been smothered or carried into neighbouring crevice by the avalanche. Searches both on ground and by helicopters were organised over a wide area and continued till late 1963

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but without the equipment being sighted or detected
by scientific means.

Simultaneously, samples of water were taken up to 1970 and were under observation for some years but no trace of contamination was detected. In 1967, a new device was taken to the same area and was duly installed on a neighbouring peak. This functioned normally for a while but was removed subsequently in 1968 and the equipment was returned to the United States. These operations as I said were apparently carried out predominantly by Indian personnel but under the joint auspices and were in the know of and with the approval at the highest political level of the Government of India at that time.

After the news appeared a few days ago, we have assembled the relevant details and the background of these expeditions with reference to available record and in consultation with both US Government and Indian Departments who were involved in this project.

We have tried to get as much technical information about the device as was possible. According to the information obtained and published literature on the subject, the device comprised of a power system energised by two to three pounds of plutonium 238 metal alloy which is contained in several doubly encapsulated leaktight

capsules. The inner capsules enclosing the plutonium are made of twenty millimeter thick tantalum, a refractory metal. Primary function of tantalum is to inhibit corrosive action of plutonium fuel. The outer capsules are of nickel alloy having high strength and temperature resistant properties. The capsules are encased in a graphite heat block which along with thermo electrical modules in turn is encased in a cylindrical aluminium casing which is fourteen inches in diameter and thirteen inches high. The total weight of the entire assembly was 32 pounds.

According to the records, it is clear that at that time all aspects of safety including possible hazards to operating hands and the general public were taken into account and the conclusion was reached that no undue hazard existed. Tests which have been carried out by the United States indicate that even under extremely unlikely conditions of complete instantaneous fuel exposure to water, there is little if any possibility of pollution attaining unsafe limits. We understand that even in such an unlikely eventuality a flow of 5000 gallons per day would itself dilute the dissolved material to safe drinking water levels. It is also believed by scientists that dangers of pollution on instantaneous exposure to air are also minimal. In brief, they claim that the design details and protective systems are such as to ensure maximum possible safety against splintering and consequential contamination and

Notwithstanding the safety factor in design and results of physical search and scientific detection, now that our government's attention has been drawn to it, we are making renewed efforts to make ourselves triply sure. It is proposed to appoint a committee of scientists to study and assess the problem and with the help of all possible expert advice to recommend such further action as may be considered necessary to safeguard against future hazards to environment and to the people. We have taken immediate action to obtain fresh samples of water from upper reaches.

As I mentioned, we have been in touch with American Government. The US authorities had provided technical details, scientific cooperation and sophisticated equipment at the time when search operations for the missing power-pack were being made in the summer of 1966.

Mr. Speaker, I can recall the critical situation with which we were faced during those days of concern, apprehension and anxiety. The authorities concerned in India at the highest level assessed the situation in terms of certain precautionary and effective devices to identify the various threats and contingencies and decided upon the measures which I have outlined above. It is clear from the records that as far as human agencies could provide against hazards, they were taken into account. It is

-6-

unfortunate that the nature intervened to present for the future as we now find it a continuing source of apprehension and anxiety.

However, as far as I see no cause of alarm on grounds of health or environmental hazards exists. Indirect evidence so far is that safety precautions built into the power pack may be as effective as has been claimed and if so pollution effects may not take place in future. It is gratifying that none have been detected so far. I would also like to assure the House that to our knowledge no other device of this kind exists on Indian soil and no such operations which carry potential national hazards would be permitted by us.
